

old, even an eighteen year old is mature enough psychologically to maintain that marital state for the rest of their lives. So don't think that the law doesn't have very much weight. It has a great deal of weight, and I contend to each and every one of you in here, if we move the age from sixteen and eighteen, and male and female, and make both parties, male and female eighteen, let them marry at the age of eighteen, I think we will see, and I truly believe this, I think we will see substantially a decrease in the number of divorces in teenage marriages.

PRESIDENT: Senator Simon.

SENATOR SIMON: Thank you, Mr. President. Two points that I want to bring up that I don't believe have been discussed. Senator Venditte had mentioned in his comments earlier that by passing the Committee amendments and having it be eighteen, that we would be doing Society a favor and I guess I look at it a little differently. I don't understand where Society is going to benefit by making it harder to get married. As far as I'm concerned, if the divorces take place, Senator Venditte, those two people are the ones that are involved. It does not affect Society as a whole. As a matter of fact, by, you mentioned welfare, Senator Venditte, the point is that if a girl gets pregnant and you don't allow her to get married, then she does have to go on welfare and that's the whole point. So allow them to get married, Senator Venditte, and it will cut down on your welfare costs, which I'm sure you're concerned about. The other point that I would mention that hasn't been discussed is I'm sure the people will be leaving the state if they want to get married and we'll be losing a lot of revenue. Now that hasn't been considered so I would appeal to the fiscal conservatives here today, look where the money goes, it goes to your schools, it goes to your counties and certainly there will be some money that we'll lose there, too.

PRESIDENT: Senator Barnett.

SENATOR BARNETT: I've never heard such a debate in my life as I did that last one. I'd try to bring it back down on sort of a serious note if I could. I would like to say that regardless of what this body decides to do with the seventeen and eighteen, we cannot find anything in the statutes that would defend or protect the issue and some of the concerns that you have with the wording of "both parties". Even with what the good Honorable Senator De Camp has stated, I've offered an amendment that will be announced up there in a minute to take all the language that's in this bill, to reinstate the language that was stricken and change one word so that it would accomplish the same thing and erase any doubt about "both parties" and what you think "both parties" are. The reason that I'm doing that is I'm changing in line 7, on page 2 of the bill, the only change I'll make will be to change sixteen to eighteen. Now I'm not going to be concerned if you make it eighteen or seventeen but what we're doing is changing one word. That's the amendment I have offered depending upon what you do. Seventeen or eighteen, I'll change it to go along with the old language. The statute will say the same and we'll change one word unless you change it to seventeen, then we will change two words and that's the ages but we will leave the language as it is in the